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Results of the Wildlife and Conservation
in Illinois Survey (2004)



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Miller C.A., W.L. Anderson, L.K. Campbell and P.D. Leiter. 2007. Results of the Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois Survey (2004). Human Dimensions Program Report HR-04-07. Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, IL. 38pp.

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Results of the Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois Survey (2004)

Abstract

Randomly-selected samples of 1,500 residents of the Chicago area, 1,500 residents of the rest of Illinois, and 1,000 hunters statewide, were utilized for this study. Persons on the mailing lists were sent, at 14-day intervals: 1) a self-administered, 8-page questionnaire, cover letter, and postage-paid return envelope; 2) thank you/reminder postcard; 3) a second copy of the questionnaire; 4) another thank you/reminder postcard, and 5) a third copy of the questionnaire. After adjusting for undeliverable and unusable questionnaires, the response rates were: 37% (n=482) for *Chicago-area general public*, 49% (n=640) for *rest-of-Illinois general public*, and 61% (n=558) for *hunters statewide*. Two-thirds (68%) of all respondents said they fed wildlife (primarily song birds and squirrels) at least part of the year, and one-third (32%) reported taking trips to view wildlife. In addition, 43% of the respondents indicated they had experienced problems (most commonly digging and burrowing) with wildlife (most commonly raccoons, squirrels, and opossums) around their homes. One-half (48%) of the Chicago-area general public have had problems with Canada geese--usually droppings fouling golf courses, beaches, and other public areas. Similarly, 34% of the respondents have had problems with free-ranging feral housecats, with the most common complaint being associated with cats' propensity to kill birds or small mammals. One-half (51%) of the Chicago-area general public, 70% of the rest-of-Illinois general public, and 90% of the hunters statewide have heard of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer. The findings of this study suggest that the citizens of Illinois—hunters and non-hunters alike—value wildlife resources, natural areas, and a healthy environment, and support their responsible stewardship for the benefit of future generations.

Objective

To determine public attitudes toward wildlife issues, participation in wildlife-associated activities, and the importance of those activities to the general public.

Methods

The data for this study were collected via 2 surveys of residents of Illinois: 1) the general public and 2) licensed hunters. For the general public, the mailing lists were ordered from Survey Sampling, Fairfield, CT, and consisted of 1,500 names/addresses from nine counties (Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will) in the Chicago area, and 1,500 names/addresses representing the rest of the state. The mailing list for hunters (1,000 names/addresses) was compiled from information recorded on 2002 Illinois Habitat Stamp stubs. In addition to a hunting license, most hunters 16 years of age or older are required to have a habitat stamp.

Persons on the mailing lists were sent a self-administered, 8-page questionnaire, cover letter, and postage-paid return envelope (Appendix A) on February 17, 2004 (general public) or February 25 (hunters). The questionnaire addressed wildlife-related activities, problems with nuisance wildlife, and attitudes toward wildlife and natural resource use. Subsequently, at 14-day intervals, nonrespondents were mailed a thank you/reminder postcard, a second copy of the questionnaire, another thank you/reminder postcard, and a third copy of the questionnaire. For the Chicago-area general public, there were 183 questionnaires returned by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable; this segment of the general public returned 482 usable questionnaires for a response rate of 37%. For the rest-of-Illinois general public, there were 181 questionnaires

that were not delivered; they returned 640 usable questionnaires for a 49% response. For the hunters statewide, there were 83 questionnaires that were not delivered; the hunters returned 558 useable questionnaires for a 61% response rate. Methods for survey questionnaire mailings and follow-up reminders are described by Miller et al. (1999).

Coded data were entered into a computer file and analyzed using SPSS 12.0. The findings were organized and presented in accordance with the 3 groups of residents that were surveyed: 1) Chicago-area general public, 2) rest-of-Illinois general public, and 3) hunters statewide.

Results and Discussion

Of the 1,680 respondents who returned usable questionnaires, 482 were from the Chicago-area general public, 640 were from the rest-of-Illinois general public, and 558 were from hunters statewide. Representatives of the Chicago-area general public averaged 53 years of age and were 59% male/41% female. The rest-of-Illinois general public were, on average, 55 years old and were 71% male/29% female. In comparison, the hunters statewide were slightly younger (49 years) and more male dominated (95% male/5% female). The ethnic makeup of all 3 groups was overwhelmingly of Caucasian/white descent. Minorities were more in evidence in the Chicago-area general public (12%) than in the rest-of-Illinois general public (2%) or the hunters statewide (3%). Additional characteristics of participants in this study are summarized in Appendix B.

Feeding and Viewing Wildlife

More than one-half of the respondents said they had fed wildlife during the 12 months preceding this survey--i.e., from March 2003 to March 2004 (Table 1). For the Chicago-area general public, the percentage was 59%, whereas it was 74% for the rest-of-Illinois general public, and 68% for hunters statewide. Birds (i.e., song birds) were by far the most frequently mentioned wildlife species that were fed, exceeding 90% for all respondents who fed (Table 1). Squirrels were also popular recipients of feeding, especially among hunters (68%) and the rest-of-Illinois general public (62%). Most (62%) of the respondents, all groups combined, spent \$49 or less per year to feed wildlife (Table 2) and most (54%) of them fed wildlife all year long (Table 3). It appears that activities associated with feeding birds and other wildlife is a popular form of recreation for a majority of Illinois' 12 million citizens.

When asked to rate the importance of seeing wildlife on a regular basis, more than 90% of the respondents, regardless of group, said it was important--i.e., "somewhat important", "important", or "very important" (Table 4). An overwhelming 98% of the hunters statewide rated seeing wildlife as important. About one-third of the respondents indicated they had taken trips to observe wildlife during the past 12 months (Table 5). For each group--Chicago-area general public, rest-of-Illinois general public, hunters statewide--the percentages were 28%, 34%, and 33%, respectively. Not surprising, 78% of the hunters statewide said they had taken 1 or more trips to hunt game animals. In contrast, 8% of the Chicago-area general public indicated they had taken trips for the purpose of hunting.

When asked to rate the importance of various wildlife-viewing programs and activities, using a scale of 1 to 5 ("not at all important" to "extremely important"), the hunters statewide

expressed higher mean ratings than either group of the general public (Table 6). The only exception related to viewing facilities on public lands. Regardless of group, the highest rating for importance related to “Wildlife populations in state fish and wildlife areas and state parks.” Similarly, when the respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the same set of wildlife-viewing programs and activities, the hunters statewide elicited ratings that were equal to or greater than those expressed by the 2 general public groups (Table 7). From a comparative standpoint, the lowest ratings were associated with Chicago-area general public’s attitude toward “Wildlife habitat projects on private lands” and “Purchase of wildlife habitat.” It appears that the opportunity to view wildlife is important to the citizens of Illinois, especially hunters statewide.

Problems with Wildlife

Types of Problems: One-half (52%) of the Chicago-area general public reported experiencing problems with wildlife around their home in the past 12 months (Table 8). In contrast, 44% of the rest-of-Illinois general public and 35% of the hunters statewide reported having home-related problems with wildlife. The most common problem, which was emphasized by all 3 groups, was associated with “Digging and burrowing on property.” For the Chicago-area general public and the rest-of-Illinois general public, the second and third most common problems were “Droppings” and “Scattering garbage,” respectively. However, for the hunters statewide, the second and third most common problems were “Damage to shrubs, lawns, or landscaping” and “Living in garage, shed, or other outbuildings on property.”

Of the Chicago-area general public who had problems with wildlife, 50% said the problems were caused by raccoons (Table 9). Squirrels and opossums were the 2nd and 3rd most

common problem makers for the Chicago-area residents. For the rest-of-Illinois general public, the species of wildlife that most frequently caused problems were, in descending order, raccoons, squirrels, and rabbits. For the hunters statewide, the most common problem species were raccoons, opossums, and coyotes. Thus, the citizens of Illinois have more problems with raccoons than with any other wildlife species and, in the eyes of those impacted, the wildlife-related problems are most acute in the Chicago area.

Nuisance Canada Geese: About one-half (48%) of the Chicago-area general public (or their immediate family) have experienced problems with Canada geese (Table 10). In contrast, only 18% of the rest-of-Illinois general public, and 21% of hunters statewide, indicate they have had problems with this species of goose. By a wide margin, the most common problem caused by the geese was associated with "Goose droppings on golf courses, beaches, or other public areas." In fact, 88% of Chicago-area general public who had problems with Canada geese linked the problem to the birds' droppings.

The respondents were presented with several options for managing nuisance Canada geese, and then asked to indicate at what level they supported each of these options. The scale was 1 to 5 ("Unacceptable in all cases" to "Acceptable in all cases"). The results, presented in Table 11, show that the Chicago-area general public and the rest-of-Illinois general public preferred "Non-lethal control (fencing, dogs, etc.). Although hunters also rated this option relatively high, their most preferred option was "Hunting in urban areas (golf courses, forest preserves, corporate campuses, etc.). "Lethal removal of individual problem geese (such as around airports, shopping centers, etc.)" also received high ratings by all 3 groups of respondents. Geese and their unsightly droppings appear to be an ongoing problem for residents in the

Chicago area. As the goose population grows and expands so will problems associated with the big bird's messy droppings. Golf courses, corporate campuses, and subdivisions with lakes and ponds are especially vulnerable.

Free-ranging Feral Housecats: When asked whether they have had problems with free-ranging, feral housecats on their property, 20% of the Chicago-area general public, 36% of the rest-of-Illinois general public, and 44% of the hunters statewide, answered in the affirmative (Table 12). Regardless of group, the respondents invariably listed "Killing birds or small mammals" as the most frequent problem caused by cats, and "Scaring birds from birdfeeders" was the second most common.

One-fifth (19%) of the Chicago-area general public believe free-ranging, feral housecats pose a problem in their neighborhood (Table 13). In comparison, 32% of the rest-of-Illinois general public, and 46% of the hunters statewide, thought housecats were a problem in their neighborhood. About two-thirds of the respondents, regardless of group affiliation, thought the IDNR should institute a policy to control free-ranging, feral housecats (Table 14). The preferred method of control--which was most strongly advocated by hunters statewide--was "Capture and euthanize."

Chronic Wasting Disease in Deer: One-half (51%) of the Chicago-area general public, 70% of the rest-of-Illinois general public, and 90% of the hunters statewide, had heard of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in deer (Table 15). The Chicago-area general public most frequently associated CWD with the State of Wisconsin, whereas the rest-of-Illinois general public and hunters statewide linked the disease to both Wisconsin and Illinois.

The respondents were asked to rate their perceived risk of eating meat contaminated with

CWD and of contracting certain wildlife-related diseases, using a scale of 1 to 4 (“No risk” to “High risk”). The results are summarized in Table 16. Note that, regardless of whether the respondents were the general public from the Chicago area or elsewhere in the state, or were hunters statewide, the most highly perceived risk was “Contracting West Nile virus.” Compared to the other risk factors, “Eating meat contaminated with CWD” was rated relatively low by all 3 groups of respondents. These findings suggest that the hunters statewide are aware of CWD, but view it as a low-level threat to their health.

Attitudes toward Wildlife and Natural Resource Use: The respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements related to natural resource use. Using a scale from 1 to 7 (“Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”), the respondents most strongly agreed with the following statements: “We should protect wild lands for future generations to enjoy”, “It is important to me to have lands protected from development”, “Economic prosperity depends on a healthy environment”, and “I believe untouched lands in the U.S. should be set aside as wilderness” (Table 17). Conversely, the respondents most strongly disagreed with the following statements: “We can’t have economic growth and preserve wildlife at the same time”, “Economic growth is more important than preserving natural resources for future generations”, “Economic growth is more important than conserving wildlife habitat”, “Economic growth on public lands should be a higher priority than environmental concerns”, “If natural resources exist that will help the economy, we should use them regardless of where they are”, and “A sound economy is more important than protecting wildlife.”

The respondents were also asked to indicate their level of agreement with a series of statements relating to wildlife. The scale was once again from 1 to 7 (“Strongly disagree” to

“Strongly agree”), the results of which are summarized in Table 18. The strongest agreement was evident for the following statements: “Healthy populations of fish and wildlife are important to me”, “We should be sure future generations have an abundance of fish and wildlife”, “Whether or not I see wildlife it is important to know they exist”, “Loss of habitat has more impact on wildlife populations than hunting”, and “I feel hunting for food is an acceptable activity.” On the flip side, strongest disagreement was expressed for the following: “Hunting is cruel and inhumane to animals”, “Too much attention is given to wildlife in our society”, “Some species are not worth saving”, “Wildlife should have the same rights as pets, but not humans”, and “Wildlife should have the same rights as people.” Based on these findings, it appears that the citizens of Illinois--hunters and non-hunters alike--value wildlife resources, natural areas, and a healthy environment, and support their responsible stewardship for the benefit of future generations.

References

Miller, C.A., L.K. Campbell and K.D. Caldwell. [1999]. 1998-99 Illinois Hunter Harvest Survey Report. Ill. Dept. Nat. Res., Fed. Aid in Wildl. Restoration Proj. W-112-R-8, Job 1, Job Completion Rep. 77pp.

Table 1. Percent of respondents who have fed wildlife in the past 12 months (Illinois 2004).

Fed Wildlife	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,659	Chicago Area n=475	Rest of IL n=626	Hunters n=558
Yes	68%	59%	74%	68%
No	32	41	26	32

If "Yes," types of animals fed:

	All Respondents n=1,123	Chicago Area n=280	Rest of IL n=465	Hunters n=378
Birds	94%	95%	95%	92%
Deer	13	6	11	20
Turkeys	6	1	5	10
Squirrels	61	51	62	68
Other	9 ^a	11	8	9

^aRabbits (3%), raccoons (1%), and 15 miscellaneous species (5%).

Table 2. Estimated expenditures for feeding wildlife in the past 12 months (Illinois 2004).

Expenditures	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,113	Chicago Area n=278	Rest of IL n=461	Hunters n=374
Less than \$10	22%	28%	21%	18%
\$10 - \$49	40	37	40	41
\$50 - \$100	24	22	26	24
More than \$100	14	13	13	17

Table 3. Duration of feeding wildlife (Illinois 2004).

Duration	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,105	Chicago Area n=271	Rest of IL n=459	Hunters n=375
All year long	54%	58%	55%	49%
Winter only	20	14	19	24
Fall and winter	10	11	9	10
Fall, winter, and spring	17	17	17	17

Table 4. Rated importance of seeing wildlife on a regular basis during day-to-day activities (Illinois 2004).

Importance	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,643	Chicago Area n=474	Rest of IL n=623	Hunters n=546
Not important	6%	9%	7%	2%
Somewhat important	22	27	24	15
Important	34	33	35	34
Very important	39	31	35	49

Table 5. Made a trip in Illinois to participate in the following activities during the past 12 months (Illinois 2004).

Activity	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,680	Chicago Area n=482	Rest of IL n=640	Hunters n=558
Observing wildlife	32%	28%	34%	33%
Photographing wildlife	11	9	9	14
Hunting game animals	37	8	23	78
Other	4 ^a	6	5	2

^aFishing and boating (2%) and 9 miscellaneous activities (2%).

Table 6. Rated importance of selected wildlife viewing opportunities (Illinois 2004). Scale: 1=Not at all important, 2=Slightly important, 3=Moderately important, 4=Very important, 5=Extremely important.

Program or Activity	Mean Response			
	All Respondents	Chicago Area	Rest of IL	Hunters
Viewing opportunities (platforms, blinds, etc.) on public lands	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8
Wildlife habitat projects on public lands	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.7
Access to viewing sites on public lands	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.2
Wildlife habitat projects on private lands	3.1	2.8	2.9	3.4
Publications describing wildlife viewing opportunities on public land	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.0
Purchase of wildlife habitat	3.3	3.1	3.0	3.6
Wildlife populations in state fish and wildlife areas and state parks	3.7	3.6	3.6	4.0

Table 7. Rated satisfaction with selected wildlife viewing opportunities (Illinois 2004). Scale: 1=Not at all important, 2=Slightly important, 3=Moderately important, 4=Very important, 5=Extremely important.

Program or Activity	Mean Response			
	All Respondents	Chicago Area	Rest of IL	Hunters
Viewing opportunities (platforms, blinds, etc.) on public lands	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0
Wildlife habitat projects on public lands	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0
Access to viewing sites on public lands	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Wildlife habitat projects on private lands	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8
Publications describing wildlife viewing opportunities on public land	2.9	2.8	2.8	3.0
Purchase of wildlife habitat	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.8
Wildlife populations in state fish and wildlife areas and state parks	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0

Table 8. Respondents who experienced problems with wildlife around their home in the past 12 months (Illinois 2004).

Experienced Problems	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,660	Chicago Area n=472	Rest of IL n=630	Hunters n=558
Yes	43%	52%	44%	35%
No	57	48	56	65

If "Yes," type of problems experienced:

Type of Problem	All Respondents n=720	Chicago Area n=246	Rest of IL n=280	Hunters n=194
Living in attic, chimney, or other parts of house	17%	20%	17%	12%
Living in garage, shed, or other outbuildings on property	23	18	21	33
Damage to house or other buildings	13	18	10	12
Digging or burrowing on property	45	44	49	40
Damage to shrubs, yard, or landscaping	34	33	35	34
Nesting on property	19	27	15	16
Droppings	33	44	28	28
Noise	11	11	9	14
Harm/disturbance to pets	13	9	10	24
Scattering garbage	29	37	25	25
Other	11 ^a	6	12	15

^a Damage to gardens (1%), damage to bird feeders (1%), and 19 miscellaneous problems (9%).

Table 9. Species of wildlife that respondents had a problem with (Illinois 2004).

Wildlife Species	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=720	Chicago Area n=246	Rest of IL n=280	Hunters n=194
Raccoons	45%	50%	43%	43%
Muskrats	4	2	5	4
Opossums	25	24	21	31
Coyotes	16	9	14	27
Skunks	15	20	10	17
Deer	17	15	17	21
Foxes	2	3	2	3
Bats	4	2	5	5
Birds (other than geese)	20	16	24	21
Squirrels	28	37	28	20
Canada Geese	10	21	5	4
Rabbits	22	22	28	16
Beaver	2	1	1	2
Other	17 ^a	13	20	17

^a Moles (4%), chipmunks (3%), woodchucks (2%), and 10 miscellaneous species (8%).

Table 10. Respondents (or immediate family) who have experienced problems with Canada geese (Illinois 2004).

Experienced Problems	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,646	Chicago Area n=473	Rest of IL n=626	Hunters n=547
Yes	28%	48%	18%	21%
No	72	52	82	79

If "Yes," please check the type of problem you or your family have experienced:

	All Respondents n=458	Chicago Area n=228	Rest of IL n=116	Hunters n=114
Being chased by geese at a park or other public area	32%	38%	24%	30%
Goose droppings on golf courses, beaches, or other public areas	83	88	80	77
Goose droppings on my property	37	40	31	39
Aggressive behavior from geese nesting on my property	11	14	8	11
Damage to crops from geese	11	5	14	22
Damage to landscaping from geese	20	21	18	21
Other	5 ^a	6	4	4

^a Stopping traffic (2%) and 7 miscellaneous problems (3%).

Table 11. Attitudes toward selected options to manage nuisance Canada geese (Illinois 2004).
Scale: 1=Unacceptable in all cases, 2=Unacceptable in some cases, 3=Unsure, 4=Acceptable in some cases, 5=Acceptable in all cases.

Management Option	Mean Response			
	All Respondents	Chicago Area	Rest of IL	Hunters
Nest and egg destruction	2.8	3.1	2.8	2.6
Lethal removal of individual problem geese (such as around airports, shopping centers, etc.)	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5
Lethal removal of geese causing agricultural damage	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3
Hunting in urban areas (golf courses, forest preserves, corporate campuses, etc.)	3.1	2.8	2.9	3.6
Non-lethal control (fencing, dogs, etc.)	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.5
Capture geese during molt when flightless and donate to food pantries	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.4

Table 12. Respondents who have ever had a problem with free-ranging, feral housecats on their property (Illinois 2004).

Problems	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,643	Chicago Area n=472	Rest of IL n=623	Hunters n=548
Yes	34%	20%	36%	44%
No	66	80	64	56

If "Yes," type of problems experienced:

Type of Problem	All Respondents n=558	Chicago Area n=92	Rest of IL n=224	Hunters n=242
Eating domestic pets food	23%	5%	20%	33%
Digging, burrowing, or making dens	17	27	16	15
Scaring birds from birdfeeders	48	41	55	43
Physical harm to my pets	8	4	7	11
Killing birds or small mammals	65	57	62	71
Distemper and/or rabies	5	2	6	5
Other	15 ^a	21	17	12

^a Feces (4%), getting into garbage (1%), and 15 miscellaneous problems (10%).

Table 13. Percent of respondents who believe free-ranging, feral housecats pose a problem in their neighborhood (Illinois 2004).

Problem?	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,627	Chicago Area n=463	Rest of IL n=617	Hunters n=547
Yes	33%	19%	32%	46%
No	67	81	68	54

Table 14. Percent of respondents who think the Illinois Department of Natural Resources should institute a policy to control free-ranging, feral housecats (Illinois 2004).

DNR Policy?	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,561	Chicago Area n=434	Rest of IL n=589	Hunters n=538
Yes	63%	61%	61%	68%
No	37	39	39	32

If "Yes," which of the measures below do you favor most?

Control Measures	All Respondents n=985	Chicago Area n=264	Rest of IL n=358	Hunters n=363
Capture, neuter and return	26%	37%	32%	13%
Capture and euthanize	53	38	42	73
Capture and retain in shelters	18	20	22	12
Other	3 ^a	5	4	2

^a Fine owner and keep on lease (1%), and 8 miscellaneous measures (2%).

Table 15. Percentage of respondents who have heard about Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in deer (Illinois 2004).

Heard of CWD?	Percent Response			
	All Respondents n=1,640	Chicago Area n=470	Rest of IL n=618	Hunters n=552
Yes	71%	51%	70%	90%
No	29	49	30	10

If "Yes," heard about CWD in:

Place Heard of CWD	All Respondents n=1,169	Chicago Area n=238	Rest of IL n=432	Hunters n=499
Illinois	71%	58%	70%	78%
Wisconsin	75	84	67	78
States other than Illinois and Wisconsin	34	29	29	40

Table 16. Perceived risk of selected wildlife-related diseases (Illinois 2004). Scale: 1=No risk, 2=Slight risk, 3=Moderate risk, 4=High risk.

Risk	Mean Response			
	All Respondents	Chicago Area	Rest of IL	Hunter
Contracting Lyme disease	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.6
Eating meat contaminated with Chronic Wasting Disease	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.1
Becoming ill from <i>E. coli</i> bacteria	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.3
Becoming ill from <i>Salmonella</i> poisoning	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.3
Eating meat contaminated with Mad Cow Disease	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.0
Contracting West Nile virus	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8

Table 17. Attitudes of respondents toward natural resource use (Illinois 2004). Scale: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly disagree, 4=Unsure, 5=Slightly agree, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly agree.

Statement	Mean Response			
	All Respondents	Chicago Area	Rest of IL	Hunters
Economic growth is more important than preserving natural resources for future generations.	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.1
Economic prosperity depends on a healthy environment.	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.6
I believe untouched lands in the U.S. should be set aside as wilderness.	5.6	5.8	5.4	5.6
A sound economy is more important than protecting wildlife.	2.9	3.0	3.1	2.7
You can't have economic growth and preserve wildlife at the same time.	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.2
Using our natural resources to benefit the economy is more important than leaving them untouched.	3.2	3.1	3.4	3.1
It is important to me to have lands protected from development.	5.9	6.0	5.7	6.0
Natural resources should be developed to provide economic benefits to our society.	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.0
We should use land if there is an economic gain to be made from it.	3.0	3.0	3.1	2.8
Energy development on public lands should be a higher priority than environmental concerns.	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.4
Economic growth is more important than conserving wildlife habitat.	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.2
If natural resources exist that will help our economy, we should use them regardless of where they are.	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.6
We should protect wild lands for future generations to enjoy.	6.2	6.2	6.0	6.3
Natural areas should be free of visual distractions such as power lines, highways, and buildings.	5.1	5.3	5.0	5.1

Table 18. Attitudes of respondents toward wildlife (Illinois 2004). Scale: 1=Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Slightly disagree, 4=Unsure, 5=Slightly agree, 6=Agree, 7=Strongly agree.

Statement	All Respondents	Mean Response		
		Chicago Area	Rest of IL	Hunters
Healthy populations of fish and wildlife are important to me.	6.4	6.2	6.2	6.6
We should be sure future generations have an abundance of fish and wildlife.	6.4	6.3	6.3	6.6
Whether or not I see fish and wildlife it is important to know they exist.	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.4
Loss of habitat has more impact on wildlife populations than hunting.	6.1	6.0	6.0	6.4
Wildlife should have the same rights as people.	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.2
The rights of wildlife to exist are more important than human use of wildlife.	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.4
Hunting is cruel and inhumane to animals.	2.4	3.4	2.5	1.4
Wildlife should have the same rights as pets, but not humans.	3.3	3.9	3.4	2.8
Some species are not worth spending money to save.	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.0
Hunting to reduce wildlife that cause damage to crops is an acceptable practice.	5.3	4.8	5.3	5.9
Shooting animals such as deer and elk inside high fence enclosures should be illegal.	4.9	5.3	5.0	4.5
Endangered species should be protected even at the cost of the economy and jobs.	4.3	4.5	4.2	4.2
I feel hunting for food is an acceptable activity.	5.9	5.4	5.8	6.5
Too much attention is given to wildlife in our society.	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.6
Hunting for trophy animals should not be tolerated.	3.9	4.9	4.2	2.7

Appendix A. Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois Survey (2004) instrument and cover letters.

Figure 1. Cover letter sent with first mailing of the Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois Survey.



ILLINOIS
NATURAL
HISTORY
SURVEY



Dear Illinois Hunter,

You are one of a select group of Illinois hunters chosen to participate in the Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois survey. The opinions of Illinois hunters about the status of wildlife and conservation in this state will continue to shape future management of natural resources in Illinois. Your input will help us understand hunters' opinions as they relate to wildlife and conservation issues in Illinois. We ask that you take a few minutes of your time to complete the enclosed survey questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible in the envelope provided. No postage is required, and all responses will be kept strictly confidential.

We are interested in your opinions about wildlife issues in Illinois. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please call 217-244-5121.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.

Wildlife Harvest and Human Dimensions Research Program

Figure 2. Cover letter sent with second mailing of the Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois Survey.



**ILLINOIS
NATURAL
HISTORY
SURVEY**



Dear Illinois Resident,

You were recently mailed a survey asking for your opinions of wildlife and conservation in Illinois. As of this mailing, we have not received your completed questionnaire. We have included a second questionnaire in case the first one was lost or misplaced. Please take a few minutes to complete it and return it to us as soon as possible in the envelope provided. No postage is required, and all responses will be kept strictly confidential.

The opinions of Illinois residents about the status of wildlife and their habitat in this state will continue to shape future management of natural resources in Illinois. Your input will help us understand public opinion as it relates to wildlife in Illinois.

If you have already returned your questionnaire and we have not yet received it, we thank you, and please disregard this letter.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please call 217-244-5121.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.

Wildlife Harvest and Human Dimensions Research Program

Figure 3. Thank you/reminder postcard sent to non-respondents of the Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois Survey.



Dear Illinois Resident,

You have been selected to participate in the Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois Survey. A survey questionnaire was recently mailed to you. We have not received your completed questionnaire at this time. **If you have returned the questionnaire, we thank you. If you have not filled out and returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. Your input is important!**

Your name and address will be deleted from our mailing list when your questionnaire is received.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Figure 4. Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois Survey instrument.

Wildlife and Conservation in Illinois



ALL RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

Postage-paid return envelope provided



Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Division of Wildlife Resources
and the
Illinois Natural History Survey



The Department of Natural Resources is requesting disclosure of information that is necessary to accomplish the statutory purpose as outlined under the Illinois Compiled Statutes, The Wildlife Code, Chapter 520. Disclosure of information is voluntary.

The Illinois Natural History Survey is conducting a study of public attitudes toward wildlife and conservation. By wildlife, we mean raccoons, deer, geese, and other wild animals. Please take 15 minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses will tell us more about wildlife in Illinois.

Section 1. Wildlife Activities. Please give your response to the following questions about your interaction with wildlife, including attracting wildlife to your home or property.

1. Have you fed wildlife (birds, deer, squirrels, etc.) on your property within the past 12 months?

_____ Yes

_____ No (If "No," please skip to Question 2)

1a. If "Yes," what animals do you feed?

_____ Birds

_____ Turkeys

_____ Deer

_____ Squirrels

_____ Other (please identify) _____

1b. How much money would you estimate you have spent feeding wildlife in the past 12 months?

_____ 1) less than \$10

_____ 2) \$10 - \$49

_____ 3) \$50 - \$100

_____ 4) more than \$100

1c. When do you feed wildlife? Please check only **one**.

_____ 1) all year long

_____ 2) during the winter only

_____ 3) fall and winter

_____ 4) fall, winter, and spring

2. How important to you is seeing wildlife on a regular basis during your day-to-day activities? Please circle the number that matches your response.

Not
Important
1

Somewhat
Important
2

Important
3

Very
Important
4

3. Have you or a member of your immediate family made a trip in Illinois to participate in the following activities during the past 12 months? Please check all that apply.

_____ Observing Wildlife (bird watching, eagle viewing, etc.)

_____ Photographing Wildlife

_____ Hunting Game Animals

_____ Other _____

Section 2. Wildlife Viewing Opportunities. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is interested in how members of the public view IDNR efforts to provide opportunities to view wildlife in Illinois. Please provide your opinions of wildlife viewing in Illinois by completing the items in each of the questions below.

1. How **IMPORTANT** to you are the following wildlife viewing opportunities? Please circle ONE number that matches your response for each item.

<u>Program or Activity</u>	Not At All Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Viewing opportunities (platforms, blinds, etc.) on public lands	1	2	3	4	5
Wildlife habitat projects on public lands	1	2	3	4	5
Access to viewing sites on public lands	1	2	3	4	5
Wildlife habitat projects on private lands	1	2	3	4	5
Publications describing wildlife viewing opportunities on public land	1	2	3	4	5
Purchase of wildlife habitat	1	2	3	4	5
Wildlife populations in state fish and wildlife areas and state parks	1	2	3	4	5

2. How **SATISFIED** are you with the following wildlife viewing opportunities? Please circle ONE number that matches your response for each item.

<u>Program or Activity</u>	Not At All Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Viewing opportunities (platforms, blinds, etc.) on public lands	1	2	3	4	5
Wildlife habitat projects on public lands	1	2	3	4	5
Access to viewing sites on public lands	1	2	3	4	5
Wildlife habitat projects on private lands	1	2	3	4	5
Publications describing wildlife viewing opportunities on public land	1	2	3	4	5
Purchase of wildlife habitat	1	2	3	4	5
Wildlife populations in state fish and wildlife areas and state parks	1	2	3	4	5

Section 3. Problems with Wildlife. Please answer the following questions concerning wildlife problems around your home.

1. Have you experienced problems with wildlife around your home in the past 12 months?

_____ Yes

_____ No

2. If "Yes," what type of problems did you experience? Please check all that apply.

_____ Living in attic, chimney, or other parts of house

_____ Nesting on property

_____ Living in garage, shed, or other outbuildings on property

_____ Droppings

_____ Damage to house or other buildings

_____ Noise

_____ Digging or burrowing on property

_____ Harm/disturbance to pets

_____ Damage to shrubs, yard, or landscaping

_____ Scattering garbage

_____ Other (Please identify): _____

3. Please check the species of wildlife that you had a problem with. Please check all that apply.

_____ Raccoons

_____ Foxes

_____ Muskrats

_____ Bats

_____ Opossums

_____ Birds (Other than geese)

_____ Coyotes

_____ Squirrels

_____ Beaver

_____ Canada Geese

_____ Skunks

_____ Rabbits

_____ Deer

_____ Other _____

4. Have you ever had a problem with free-ranging, feral housecats on your property?

_____ Yes

_____ No

5. If "Yes," please check the type of problem you have experienced from the list below. Please check all that apply.

_____ eating domestic pets food

_____ physical harm to my pets

_____ digging, burrowing, or making dens

_____ killing birds or small mammals

_____ scaring birds from birdfeeders

_____ distemper and/or rabies

_____ other (please explain): _____

6. Do you think free-ranging, feral housecats pose a problem in your neighborhood?

_____ Yes

_____ No

7. Do you think the Illinois Department of Natural Resources should institute a policy to control free-ranging, feral housecats?

_____ Yes

_____ No

8. If "Yes," which of the measures below do you **favor most**? Please select only one choice.

_____ capture, neuter, and return

_____ capture and euthanize

_____ capture and retain in shelters

_____ other (Please identify): _____

9. Have you heard about Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in deer?

_____ Yes

_____ No (Please go to Question 5)

10. If "Yes," have you heard about CWD in: (Please check all that apply)

_____ Illinois

_____ Wisconsin

_____ States other than Wisconsin and Illinois

11. Please give your opinion of the risk of the following by circling the number that matches your response.

	No Risk	Slight Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Undecided
Contracting Lyme disease	1	2	3	4	5
Eating meat contaminated with Chronic Wasting Disease	1	2	3	4	5
Becoming ill from <i>E. coli</i> bacteria	1	2	3	4	5
Becoming ill from <i>Salmonella</i> poisoning	1	2	3	4	5
Eating meat contaminated with Mad Cow Disease	1	2	3	4	5
Contracting West Nile virus	1	2	3	4	5

Section 4. Natural Resource Use. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about natural resources use by circling the number that matches your response.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Unsure	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Economic growth is more important than preserving natural resources for future generations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Economic prosperity depends on a healthy environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I believe untouched lands in the U.S. should be set aside as wilderness.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A sound economy is more important than protecting wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
You can't have economic growth and preserve wildlife at the same time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Using our natural resources to benefit the economy is more important than leaving them untouched.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is important to me to have lands protected from development.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Natural resources should be developed to provide economic benefits to our society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We should use land if there is an economic gain to be made from it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Energy development on public lands should be a higher priority than environmental concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Economic growth is more important than conserving wildlife habitat.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If natural resources exist that will help our economy, we should use them regardless of where they are.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We should protect wild lands for future generations to enjoy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Natural areas should be free of visual distractions such as power lines, highways, and buildings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 5. Control of Nuisance Canada Geese. Current population levels of Canada geese cause problems for some residents of Illinois. Please respond to the following questions about problem Canada geese in Illinois.

1. Have you or members of your immediate family experienced problems with Canada geese in Illinois?

_____ Yes

_____ No

2. If "Yes," please check the type of problem you have experienced from the list below. Please check all that apply.

_____ being chased by geese at park or other public area

_____ goose droppings on golf courses, beaches, or other public areas

_____ goose droppings on my property

_____ aggressive behavior from geese nesting on my property

_____ damage to crops from geese

_____ damage to landscaping from geese

_____ other (please explain): _____

3. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is considering options to manage nuisance Canada geese. Please indicate your support for each of the management options by circling the number that matches your response. Assume landowner bears all costs for goose management.

Management Option	Unacceptable in all cases	Unacceptable in some cases	Unsure	Acceptable in some cases	Acceptable in all cases
Nest and egg destruction	1	2	3	4	5
Lethal removal of individual problem geese (such as around airports, shopping centers, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Lethal removal of geese causing agricultural damage	1	2	3	4	5
Hunting in urban areas (golf courses, forest preserves, corporate campuses, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Non-lethal control (fencing, dogs, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Capture geese during molt when flightless and donate to food pantries	1	2	3	4	5

Section 6. Attitudes Toward Wildlife. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about wildlife by circling the appropriate number provided.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Unsure	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Healthy populations of fish and wildlife are important to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We should be sure future generations have an abundance of fish and wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Whether or not I see fish and wildlife it is important to know they exist.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Loss of habitat has more impact on wildlife populations than hunting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wildlife should have the same rights as people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The rights of wildlife to exist are more important than human use of wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting is cruel and inhumane to animals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Wildlife should have the same rights as pets, but not humans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Some species are not worth spending money to save.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting to reduce wildlife that cause damage to crops is an acceptable practice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shooting animals such as deer and elk inside high fence enclosures should be illegal.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Endangered species should be protected even at the cost of the economy and jobs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel hunting for food is an acceptable activity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Too much attention is given to wildlife in our society.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting for trophy animals should not be tolerated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 7. General Information. The following questions are important to help us understand more about Illinois residents . Please tell us something about yourself by responding to the following questions. All responses are kept confidential.

1. What is your gender? _____ Male _____ Female

2. Please give your age. _____ Years

3. What is your county of residence? _____ County

4. How long have you lived in Illinois? _____ Years

5. What is your ethnic/cultural group? (Please check one)

_____ 1) Caucasian/White

_____ 2) African-American

_____ 3) Asian-American

_____ 4) Hispanic

_____ 5) Native American (American Indian)

_____ 6) Other (please specify) _____

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Please check one)

_____ 1) Less than high school

_____ 2) Graduated high school

_____ 3) Technical/Vocational school

_____ 4) Some college

_____ 5) Associate degree (2 years of college)

_____ 6) Bachelor's degree

_____ 7) Some graduate study

_____ 8) Graduate degree or professional school

7. How would you describe the size of your community? (Please check one)

_____ 1) Rural, farm

_____ 2) Rural non-farm

_____ 3) Small town, under 10,000 people

_____ 4) Small city, 10,000 to 100,000 people

_____ 5) Mid-sized city, 100,000 to 1 million people

_____ 6) Large city, over 1 million people

8. What was your approximate total household income before taxes in 2003? (Please check one)

_____ 1) Under \$20,000

_____ 2) \$20,000-\$39,999

_____ 3) \$40,000-\$59,999

_____ 4) \$60,000-\$79,999

_____ 5) \$80,000-\$99,999

_____ 6) \$100,000 or more

9. Which political party do you identify yourself with most?

_____ 1) Republican

_____ 2) Democrat

_____ 3) Independent

_____ 4) Libertarian

_____ 5) Other (please specify) _____

10. Do you belong to any environmental or conservation organizations? _____ Yes _____ No

10 a. If "Yes," please list the organizations to which you belong: _____

COMMENTS

**RETURN ENVELOPE IS PROVIDED – POSTAGE-PAID
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!**

Your input will help us understand more about agriculture and wildlife in Illinois.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives federal assistance and therefore must comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the U.S. Constitution, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, 524 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62701-1787, (217) 782-7616 or the officer of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Appendix B. Background information for participants in the Wildlife and Conservation Survey (Illinois 2004).

Information	All Respondents	Chicago Area	Rest of IL	Hunters
<u>Gender</u>	(n=1,669)	(n=479)	(n=632)	(n=558)
Male	76%	59%	71%	95%
Female	24	41	29	5
<u>Age</u>	(n=1,625)	(n=462)	(n=611)	(n=552)
Mean (years)	52	53	55	49
<u>Years lived in Illinois</u>	(n=1,636)	(n=469)	(n=613)	(n=554)
Mean (years)	46	44	49	44
<u>Ethnic/cultural group</u>	(n=1,627)	(n=467)	(n=608)	(n=552)
Caucasian/White	95%	88%	98%	97%
African-American	2	5	<1	1
Asian-American	1	3	<1	<1
Hispanic	1	3	1	1
Native American	<1	1	<1	<1
Other	1	1	<1	1
<u>Highest level of education completed</u>	(n=1,634)	(n=471)	(n=619)	(n=544)
Less than high school	5%	3%	4%	7%
Graduated high school	26	13	29	34
Technical/Vocational school	6	4	7	7
Some college	21	18	24	22
Associate degree (2 years of college)	10	9	9	12
Bachelor's degree	15	24	11	10
Some graduate study	5	9	5	2
Graduate degree or professional school	12	21	12	5
<u>Size of community</u>	(n=1,628)	(n=467)	(n=616)	(n=545)
Rural, farm	18%	1%	19%	32%
Rural non-farm	5	2	6	6
Small town, under 10,000 people	27	14	31	32
Small city, 10,000 to 100,000 people	36	55	34	23
Mid-sized city, 100,000 to 1 million people	8	9	10	7
Large city, over 1 million people	6	20	<1	<1

Appendix B - continued.

Appendix B. Continued - page 2.

	All Respondents	Chicago Area	Rest of IL	Hunters
<u>Approximate total (gross) household income before taxes in 2003</u>	(n=1,458)	(n=419)	(n=539)	(n=500)
<\$20,000	8%	5%	12%	6%
\$20,000-\$39,999	22	16	25	24
\$40,000-\$59,999	25	21	24	29
\$60,000-\$79,999	19	18	19	20
\$80,000-\$99,999	9	10	10	9
\$100,000 or more	17	30	11	11
Mean	\$60,000	\$70,000	\$55,000	\$56,000
<u>Belong to any environmental or conservation organizations?</u>	(n=1,613)	(n=466)	(n=609)	(n=538)
Yes	18%	14%	12%	27%
No	82	86	88	73